

December 2018 Meeting

Opening Prayer

Lord, teach us to pray:

“Our Father...”

The Reading

(To be read by the Leader)

“God created humanity in His image and likeness, in His divine image He created him; male and female He created them....God looked at everything He had made, and He found it very good, (Gen. 1, 27, 31)”

In his letter to the people of Corinth, St. Paul stated; “Everything is lawful, but not everything is beneficial. Everything is lawful but not everything builds up. (1 Cor 10, 23)” Brothers, just because it is legal does not make it morally appropriate. These words written two thousand years ago present us with the reality that people, governments and societies were dealing with the problem of morality in the public arena, just as we continue to do today. As Catholic men, as heads of Catholic households and as Catholics in the workplace and the community at times we find ourselves in a position where we are unable to defend/promote our Catholic faith because we do not feel competent in our knowledge of what the Church teaches in a specific area.

I have chosen to spend a bit of time on the **morality of marijuana** because as of Oct. 2018 it has become legal to purchase recreational use marijuana in Canada. Brothers, many of us grew up knowing that pot smoking happened among our friends, school mates, work colleagues and social circles. Some of us may have experience smoking marijuana as well. The vast majority of marijuana use was always done behind closed doors. Why? Because it was illegal and there was a good chance for an encounter with the legal system if one was found with any significant quantity of this illegal drug on their person. We knew about marijuana as what the uneducated perspective understood it to be, the drug of choice for a certain sector of our population. I would say based on my experience living in the working world that we are sadly mistaken if we think that it is only a small group of college kids that smoke some marijuana on weekends. I dare say that marijuana use has

been wide-spread by a large group and age range of individuals for many many decades. This usage of what was an illegal drug simply took place for the most part behind closed doors and with discretion, because of the legal ramifications that could occur if one was found to be in possession of this substance.

“God created humanity in His image and likeness, in His divine image He created him; male and female He created them....God looked at everything He had made, and He found it very good, (Gen. 1, 27, 31)”

The Reflection

(To be read by the Leader)

Brothers, what I have just offered is my opinion based on lived experience and my thought is that many of you have some experience of marijuana through friends or colleagues simply because though it has always been illegal, for the most part it has not been considered taboo or evil. The general thought on marijuana, when compared to the plethora of dangerous and addictive drugs, prescription and black-market variety, has always been, that marijuana is relatively harmless. My friends that is where the problem is rooted. Alcohol is relatively harmless when used responsibly but we are all aware of devastating consequences for families, individuals and communities when this relatively harmless alcohol is used in an irresponsible way. I am not an alarmist. I am simply stating substantiated facts. Alcohol has been legal in this country for many years, but the jury is still out about whether the good it serves has outperformed the documented damage that it has done to countless thousands of individuals and families.

“You don’t have to be a priest or police officer or counsellor to know the terrible toll alcohol takes. There are many cultural and practical reasons why the prohibition of alcohol is both unwise and impractical, but that it is legal should not obscure that it does massive damage, often to the most vulnerable. The same goes by the way, for the casinos and video lottery terminals that the government pushes, to use the apt word, upon vulnerable populations, (Fr. Raymond De Souza, National Post Oct. 09, 2018)” All this to say in support of St. Paul’s warning two thousand years ago, it seems that almost everything is lawful, but not everything is beneficial.

On October 17, 2018, the date, legalization of recreational marijuana use became legal, the

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement. One part of the letter stated the following: “The Catholic Church for its part, continues to underline the ethical problems involved with the recreational use and abuse of this drug: the negative risks that impact on psychological and physical health, the growing problems of a society more and more dependent on drugs and alcohol, the possibility of brain damage especially to those under the age of 25, the negative repercussions on families and local communities....” Brothers, we need to be conversant on the morality, the ethics and the reality of what surrounds us in our society. In a particular way we need to be able to speak to our children and grandchildren with faith-based knowledge, when they broach these topics and because we are the leaders in our households and we need to set the tone for what is acceptable and what is not. Stay tuned for continued discussion on this issue.

Created in the Image and Likeness of God (Gen. 1, 26-27)

Meditation Period

(The Leader now invites the members to spend a few moments in silent reflection, as the above text is not meant to be a ready-made answer but a starter for personal reflection on the theme.)

Fraternal Sharing

(The leader now invites the members to share with their Brother Knights any relevant thoughts that came to them during the meditation period.)

Closing Prayer

(Recited by all)

Let us pray:

“Almighty ever-living God, grant that we may always conform our will to yours and serve your majesty in sincerity of heart. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen